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In re Application of	:	OFFICE OF PETITIONS
Hubschwerlen, et al.	:	
Application No. 10/554,732	:	DECISION
Filed/Deposited: 28 October, 2005	:	
Attorney Docket No. 64391(41925)	:	

This is a decision on the petition filed on 5 February, 2010, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) for revival of an application abandoned due to unintentional delay, and—in light of the averment at page 2, paragraph 5 of the supporting statement submitted with the petition—also considered as a petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181 (no fee) requesting withdrawal of the holding of abandonment in the above-identified application.

The petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is **DISMISSED**; the petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) is **GRANTED**.

As to the Request to Withdraw
the Holding of Abandonment

Petitioners always are directed to the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) for guidance as to the proper showing requirements for relief under 37 C.F.R. §1.181.

As to Allegations of
Unintentional Delay

The requirements of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) are the petition and fee therefor, a reply, a proper statement of unintentional delay under the regulation, and, where applicable, a terminal disclaimer and fee. (Petitioners' attentions always are directed to the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(II).)

BACKGROUND

The record reflects as follows:

Applicant failed to reply timely and properly to the non-final Office action mailed on 19 December, 2008, with reply due absent extension of time on or before 19 March, 2009.

The application went abandoned by operation of law after midnight 19 March, 2009.

The Office mailed the Notice of Abandonment on 21 August, 2009.

On 17 September, 2009, Petitioners filed a petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181—and averred non-receipt of the Office action in question, however, Petitioner failed to provide the complete set of statements and the documentation required, as set forth below in the citation from the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP). (These include, *inter alia*, statements of non-receipt at the correspondence address of record, search of the file and non-discovery, description of the docketing system and statement of sufficient reliability, a copy of the docket sheet (or file jacket cover) for the instant application and a copy of the due date calendar/docket for the office/firm and other such requirements as set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I).) The petition was dismissed on 7 December, 2009

On 5 February, Petitioners filed, *inter alia*, a petition (with fee) pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b), a reply in the form of an amendment, and made the statement of unintentional delay. Notably, at page 2, paragraph 5 of the supporting statement submitted with the petition, Petitioners once again averred that the Office action was not received, and so re-advanced their petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181 requesting withdrawal of the holding of abandonment. However, Petitioners submitted no showing in support of that averment.

With regard to Petitioner's request to withdraw the holding of abandonment pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181, the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) provides in pertinent part as to non-receipt:

The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner describing the system used for recording an Office action received at the correspondence address of record with the USPTO. The statement should establish that the docketing system is sufficiently reliable. It is expected that the record would include, but not be limited to, the application number, attorney docket number, the mail date of the Office action and the due date for the response.

Practitioner must state that the Office action was not received at the correspondence address of record, and that a search of the practitioner's record(s), including any file jacket or the equivalent, and the application contents, indicates that the Office action was not

received. A copy of the record(s) used by the practitioner where the non-received Office action would have been entered had it been received is required.

A copy of the practitioner's record(s) required to show non-receipt of the Office action should include the master docket for the firm. That is, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the master docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action. If no such master docket exists, the practitioner should so state and provide other evidence such as, but not limited to, the following: the application file jacket; incoming mail log; calendar; reminder system; or the individual docket record for the application in question.¹

The availability of applications and application papers online to applicants/practitioners who diligently associate their Customer Number with the respective application(s) now provides an applicant/practitioner on-demand information as to events/transactions in an application.

Out of an abundance of caution, Petitioners always are reminded that those registered to practice and all others who make representations before the Office **must** inquire into the underlying facts of representations made to the Office and support averments with the appropriate documentation—since all owe to the Office the continuing duty to disclose.²

STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Congress has authorized the Commissioner to "revive an application if the delay is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been "unavoidable." 35 U.S.C. §133 (1994).³ The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) and (b) set forth the requirements for a Petitioner to revive a previously unavoidably or unintentionally, respectively, abandoned application under this congressional grant of authority.

Unintentional delays are those that do not satisfy the very strict statutory and regulatory requirements of unavoidable delay, and also, by definition, are not intentional.⁴))

¹ See: MPEP §711.03(c) (I)(A).

² See supplement of 17 June, 1999. The Patent and Trademark Office is relying on petitioner's duty of candor and good faith and accepting a statement made by Petitioner. See Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53160 and 53178, 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 88 and 103 (responses to comments 64 and 109)(applicant obligated under 37 C.F.R. §10.18 to inquire into the underlying facts and circumstances when providing statements to the Patent and Trademark Office).

³ 35 U.S.C. §133 provides:

35 U.S.C. §133 Time for prosecuting application.

Upon failure of the applicant to prosecute the application within six months after any action therein, of which notice has been given or mailed to the applicant, or within such shorter time, not less than thirty days, as fixed by the Commissioner in such action, the application shall be regarded as abandoned by the parties thereto, unless it be shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that such delay was unavoidable.

Allegations as to the Request to
Withdraw the Holding of Abandonment

The guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) specifies the showing required and how it is to be made and supported.

Petitioners appear not to have made the showing required.

As to Allegations of
Unintentional Delay

The requirements of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) are the petition and fee therefor, a reply, a proper statement of unintentional delay under the regulation, and, where applicable, a terminal disclaimer and fee.

It appears that the requirements under the rule have been satisfied.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, the petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is **dismissed**, however, the petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) is **granted**.

The instant application is released to the Technology Center/AU 1617 for further processing in due course.

Petitioners may find it beneficial to view Private PAIR within a fortnight of the instant decision to ensure that the revival has been acknowledged by the TC/AU in response to this decision. It is noted that all inquiries with regard to that change in status need be directed to the TC/AU where that change of status must be effected—that does not occur in the Office of Petitions.

⁴ Therefore, by example, an unintentional delay in the reply might occur if the reply and transmittal form are to be prepared for shipment by the US Postal Service, but other pressing matters distract one's attention and the mail is not timely deposited for shipment.

Telephone inquiries regarding this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3214—it is noted, however, that all practice before the Office is in writing (see: 37 C.F.R. §1.2⁵) and the proper authority for action on any matter in this regard are the statutes (35 U.S.C.), regulations (37 C.F.R.) and the commentary on policy (MPEP). Therefore, no telephone discussion may be controlling or considered authority for Petitioner's action(s).

/John J. Gillon, Jr./
John J. Gillon, Jr.
Senior Attorney
Office of Petitions

⁵ The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.2 provide:

§1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.

All business with the Patent and Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of applicants or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.